

SUPPLEMENT

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SPIRITUALISM,—TESTIMONIES, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

BY A TRUTH SEEKER.

NO. XIV.

GUARDIAN ANGELS AND MINISTERING SPIRITS.

In all nature we may observe a contrasted duality.—Positive and Negative—Light and Darkness—Good and Evil : and the potency of an influence for good, when that influence is perverted, becomes, in general, the measure of its capacity for evil. Man, on earth, stands midway between opposing forces; he may yield to his lower nature, and to the promptings of evil within and around him, till he sinks to the lowest hells of godlessness and sensuality : or, he may become the willing recipient of influx from the highest heavens, and, by co-operating herewith, conquer the hells, and ascend the mount of transfiguration, at the summit of which he becomes transformed into the likeness of the angels. This life-struggle is the epic of humanity ;—the “ Holy War ” that is ever waging between the armies of Immanuel and the hosts of Diabolos for the town of Mansoul. “ If the Lord be God follow him, but if Baal be God, then follow him,” is the challenge, which down the long line of ages comes direct to every man. Yes! life is a battle and a march; and well for man that it is so ;—that he is endowed with a nature in discrete degree above the beasts of the field—and is constituted a moral agent—a responsible being, with a capacity of progress bounded only by the Infinite will.

We think it was Queen Elizabeth, who wished her portrait to be painted without shadows ;—forgetting that where there are no shadows, is just where there are no lights; and were the moral world all lights and no shadows, as some think; they would like to have it; were there no difficulties to surmount, no perils to brave, no temptations to resist, no sacrifices to endure; where would be those virtues and qualities which ennoble and dignify our nature.

To apply these reflections to the subject of our last article, and to the question so often put, “ How is it that in intercourse with the spiritual world men are subjected to the deceits, temptations, and molestations of evil spirits? let us first put the question in a more general and comprehensive form, thus :—“ How is it that men are subjected to the influence of evil spirits in the mortal body, and out of it?” We place the question on this broader basis to indicate the analogy which we believe exists between the spiritual and the natural world; and, so put,

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we think the question cannot be satisfactorily answered without considering this farther and deeper one "What is the chief end and aim of our present life"? If it be "happiness" as the poet affirms; that is, present happiness; then, looking at the world as it is, we cannot help thinking that the design, has, in part, miscarried; but if, as we believe, our present life is designed chiefly as preparatory for a life beyond, that its work is educational, that we form here the groundwork and basis of a character that will endure through the ages;—then, it seems to us, that these mingled and opposing influences are those best adapted for that development and discipline, that exercise of our spiritual nature and faculties which we need. In this view, not only the temporal calamities of life,—losses, sickness, bereavement; but also the spiritual evils and temptations to which we are subject, may be a means of quickening our spiritual life, and deepening our sense of its infinite issues, and of the need we have at all times to be, careful, prayerful, truthful, and earnest; shaping our course by the polar star of right, regardless of the ever-shifting and delusive lights of a temporary expediency. No evil need be wholly so to us. "There is a soul of goodness in things evil had we but patience to distil it out." Of one thing we feel assured; Spiritualism may be a means of calling out and intensifying the deepest and most interior principles of our nature;—of elevating us to a higher sphere of spiritual life; or, of sinking us lower in the godless depths of an unregenerate humanity.

In our last article, we exhibited "the night side" of Spiritualism: in this, we purpose to present it in a more attractive and winning guise. *Guardian Angels!*—*Ministering Spirits!*—the theme suggests all genial and sunny thoughts, it lays deep hold of our affections, it comes to us like the recollections of childhood,—like the remembrance of those loving mother's-eyes that beamed upon us in infancy. Yes! it is not a fossilized dogma, but an instinctive and vital belief,—a revelation written in the heart, and which shines luminous there, and not less so in the pages of the sacred volume. Let us briefly advert to some of the proofs and illustrations of it which that volume contains.

Without going so far as to aver with Swedenborg, that *all* angels were once men, (for in the boundless spiritual universe of God there may be beings in comparison with whom man is but a Zoophyte) we may yet as a preliminary observation remark that in the Bible the term Angel (messenger, or one sent) is significant not of nature but of office.* I. that "angel" and "man" are often used indifferently as synonymous and interchangeable: II. that angels are seen as men: III. that the angel who appeared to John the Revelator plainly asserted

* I.—Haggai i. 13. Matt. ii. 7. Rev ii. 1, 2. II. Judges xiii. Dan. ix. 21. Luke xxiv 4. compare with John xx. 12. III. Gen. xix. 1, 10, 11. Acts x. 3, 30. Rev. xxi 17.

"It has been asserted by some writers, that, in the angelophanies both of the Old and New Testament, the angels assumed a material body for the purpose of making themselves visible to men. It is a sufficient reply to this,—first that there is not a shadow of evidence for it, and that you might just as well assume that human beings have no bodies except while you are looking at them; and, secondly, there is evidence enough against it in the facts of the case. The disappearance of the angel is as sudden as his appearance. What becomes of the assumed material body when he has done with it? According to this notion, when he disappears he ought to leave a corpse behind him." *Foregleams of Immortality.*

his humanity: IV. and that St. Paul, after dwelling upon the worthies of the Old Testament who had "all died in faith" speaks of them as "a great cloud of witnesses" encompassing us about: V. but whether there are angels who generically, or, in discrete degree, differ from spirit-men, or not: the Bible clearly teaches the constant care and vigilance of the angels in our behalf: VI. and gives us many illustrations of the fact that they are an "innumerable company" employed on errands of mercy to men. The angels who met Jacob were so numerous, that he called the place where he met them Mahanaim or "the two hosts." When the King of Syria sent "a great host" to seize Elisha; the prophet, speaking to his servant of 'their (to him) invisible guardians; comforted him with the assurance,— "they that be with us are more than they that be with them"; and when the young man's spiritual sight was opened, he beheld "the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire" round about Elisha: VII. angels delivered Daniel from the Lions, the three Hebrews from the fire, and Peter from prison. We read even of Jesus, that "an angel strengthened him," that "angels ministered to him," that "two (spirit-) men, which were Moses and Elias, appeared in glory and talked to him," and that, when betrayed to his enemies, he said to the disciple who drew a sword to defend him, "thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and He will presently give me more than *twelve legions* of angels." The Rev. Richard Baxter, after replying to various objections to this doctrine of angelic ministration, and citing numerous scripture-illustrations of its truth; says, "above *two hundred and sixty times* are angels mentioned in Scripture, and yet how little notice do we take of their help."

In addition to the class of passages in Scripture adverted to, there is another class of texts which appear to favour the belief, that a spiritual or celestial guardianship is specially attached to some individuals, if not indeed to all. Thus, Jacob, speaking of his grandsons, exclaims, "the angel who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." In Ecclesiastes we read "Say not before the angel that it was an error." Judith, (Apocrypha) says, "His angel hath been my keeper, both going here and abiding there, and returning from thence." and Jesus speak-

IV. Rev. xxii. 8, 9. V.—Heb. chap. xi, xii. 1. VI. Psalm xxxiv. 7. Psalm xci. 11, 12. Heb. i. 7, 14. We think that the 14th verse of this chapter sets forth clearly that ministration to the servants of God is a *universal* angelic mission—the *established law* of the celestial world. In reference to verse 7, see Bloomfield's Commentary on the Hebrews. VII. The Rev. S. Noble observes on this text, "The prophet doubtless being the immediate agent of God, was in consociation with the angelic world, and in the midst, as to his spirit, of guardian angels: but his servant did not see the angels themselves, but appearances representative of the defence and protection, which, by the ministry of angels, surrounded him from the Lord." The Rev. J. Simpson, remarks on the same passage, "Angelic spirits, as chariots and horses of fire" surround, not only the prophets of God, but even the weakest christians; and, were our eyes opened by the Divine illumination and power, we should always perceive them encamped around us as our guardian defenders against the legions of our spiritual foes."

* We are aware that many divines consider that by "the angel" in this and other texts, we are to understand God—the second person in the Trinity: We have not space here to discuss the truth of this opinion, but we think its fallacy has been sufficiently shown by Baxter and other writers. See Baxter's certainty of the World of Spirits; Chap. "concerning Angels."

ing of little children, says "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The prevalence of this belief in the Apostolic Christian Church may be inferred from the fact, that, when Peter, after the angel had delivered him from prison, went to the disciples, they would not at first believe that it was him; but said, "It is *his* angel." This expression becomes still more significant, when we bear in mind that in the East, to this day, a man's guardian spirit is held to be a sort of double, or *doppelganger* of himself; and is styled '*his* angel.'

The belief that a spiritual and celestial guardianship is exercised over mortals is diffused beyond either Judaism or Christianity. As remarked by Archbishop Tillotson. "This doctrine of Angels, is not a peculiar doctrine of the Jewish or Christian Religion; but the general doctrine of *all* religions that ever were, and therefore cannot be objected against by any but Atheists:" and the author of "An Enquiry after Happiness" (published 1692) observes "I cannot think that the Order, Beauty, and Greatness of the Creator, the fixt and constant returns of fruitful seasons, the filling men's hearts with food and gladness, were the only testimonies which God gave the Gentiles of himself and his care for Mankind; when I read in *Daniel* of the Princes of *Græcia and Persia*, and find that Provinces were committed to Angels as the Viceroys and Lieutenants of God, I cannot think that these devout and charitable Spirits did with less zeal in their Provinces labour to promote the honor of God, and the good of Man, than evil Spirits did the dishonour of the one and the ruin of the other: and unless the frequent appearances of Angels in the beginning had possessed men's minds with a firm persuasion that there was a constant commerce maintained between Heaven and Earth: and that Spirits very frequently did visibly engage themselves in the protection and assistance of Men; I cannot as much as imagine what foundation there could be for the numerous impostures of Oracles, or upon what ground the custom of putting themselves under the patronage of some Tutelar Spirit, could have prevailed in the Pagan world. I do not therefore doubt, but that the Gentile World received very many good offices and advantages from good Angels, as well as suffered many mischiefs from evil ones: and I think I might with good probability believe that every good heathen as well as *Socrates* had the assistance of a good spirit very frequently."

In the earliest literature of classical antiquity, we find traces of this belief. *Hesiod* speaks of spirits

"By great Jove designed

To be on earth the guardians of mankind.

and both *Homer* and *Virgil* furnish instances of apparitions, warnings, and predictions of spirits to mortals. The Roman men swore by their *Genius* or good spirit.* Both Greeks and Romans had their *lares* and *lemures*; the *lemures* were

*The Rev. H. Thompson remarks, "The genii were deities of an inferior rank, the constant companions and guardians of men, capable of giving useful and prophetic impulses, acting as a sort of mediator between the gods and men. Some were supposed to be friendly, others hostile, and many believed one of each kind to be attached from his birth to every mortal: that of each individual was a shadow of himself."

It may be observed, that the *Koran* assigns two angels to every man, one to record

evil spirits who haunted the wicked and impious; the *lares* (familiares) were the spirits of virtuous men who were believed to exercise a special guardianship over households and families. At the feet of the image of the *lar* was usually placed the figure of a dog, to intimate vigilance. Plautus represents a *lar* as using these words:—

“ I am the family *lar*
Of this house whence you see me coming out.
‘Tis many years now that I keep and guard
This family; both father and grandsire
Of him that has it now I aye protected.

The Romans also had their *Lares Urbani*, who presided over cities, their *Lares Marini* who presided over the sea, etc. Many of the Roman coins were inscribed “To the *Genius* of the Roman people.”

The faith of Latin Christendom, especially in the middle ages, does not appear to have differed very widely in this respect from that of Pagan Rome. Occupations and Professions, Cities and Kingdoms, had each their Patron-Saint—their guardian and protecting Spirit. And the Romish calendar may serve to show that this faith is not extinct, and is not repudiated by the Romish Church. That each individual has his guardian angel, has always been a favourite tenet of that church: thus, the Rev. Alban Butler, says, “Amongst other adorable dispensations of the divine mercy in favour of men, it is not the least; that he has been pleased to establish a communion of spiritual commerce between us on earth and his holy angels, whose companions we hope one day to be in the kingdom of his glory. It is clear in the Holy Scriptures that the angels receive their very name from their office, in being employed by God in executing his commissions in our favour. That particular angels are appointed by God, to watch over each among his servants, is an article of the Roman Catholic Church of which no ecclesiastical writer in the pale of the Church ever entertained the least doubt. That every man even among sinners and infidels, has a guardian angel, is the doctrine of the most eminent fathers, and is so strongly supported by the most sacred authority, that it cannot be called in question. The same writer quotes St. Bernard, as saying, “consider with how great respect, awe, and modesty, we ought to behave in the sight of the angels, lest we offend their holy eyes, and render ourselves unworthy of their company. Woe to us, if they who would chase away our enemy be offended by our negligence, and deprive us of their visits * * * Above all, the angels of peace expect us to live in unity and peace.” Indeed, this belief in Guardian Angels has been carried so far in the Romish Church, as, in the opinion of many Protestants, to become a species of idolatry; and there is no doubt that this is one of the chief reasons why in Protestant communities the doctrine is so generally looked upon with distrust, and even when it is believed in, is seldom prominently brought forward: “but surely,” says Tillotson, “we may believe they (the angels) do us good, without any obligation to pray to

his good, and the other his evil actions; they are so merciful, that if an evil action has been done, it is not recorded till the man has slept; and if in that interval he repents, they place on the record that God has pardoned him. The doctrine of angels also occupies a prominent position in the Jewish Rabbinical and devotional books.

and may own them as the ministers of God's providence, without making them the objects of our worship." As Baxter remarks, "It is a doleful instance of the effect of a perverse kind of opposition to Popery, and running from one extreme to another, to note how little sense most Protestants show of the great benefits that we receive by angels. How seldom we hear them in public or private, give thanks to God for their ministry and help? and more seldom pray for it. When hear we any ministers teach believers what love and what thanks they owe to angels? Whereas the excellency and holiness of their natures obligeth us to love them, and their love and care of us, bespeaketh thankfulness; yea, we have teachers that would persuade men that this savoureth of Popery, and doth derogate from Christ; and yet if the people love and honour and maintain them, they take this to be no derogation from Christ; as if *they* were more amiable than angels, or Christ may not use the ministry of angels as well as *theirs*."

Many however, of the most eminent Protestant-reformers and writers have maintained the truth of the doctrine in question. Luther, after quoting some Scripture passages which favour it, says, "Now whosoever thou art, that fearest the Lord, be of good courage; take thou no care, neither be faint hearted, nor make any doubt of the angels' watching and protection; for most certainly they are about thee, and carry thee upon their hands. How, or in what manner it is done, take thou no heed; God says it, therefore it is most sure and certain." Melancthon, believed that he had himself seen an angel, by whose timely warning, communicated to him, his friend Grynceus was saved from great peril. Bishop Hall, says with great humility, "It is, I confess, my great sin, that I have filled mine eyes with other objects, and have been slack in returning praises to my God, for the continual assistance of those blessed and beneficent spirits. Oh! that the dust and clay were so washed out of mine eyes, that I might behold, together with the presence, the numbers, the beauties, and excellencies of those my ever present guardians." In reply to the question "Whether hath every one a particular angel to attend him?" Bishop Beveridge answers—"As for the wicked, it cannot be supposed that the good angels are for their company. But that those who are truly pious, have every one his angel always with him, is very probable." Among Nonconformists, Dr. Owen, says, "Great is the privilege, manifold are the blessings and benefits that we are made partakers of, by this ministry of angels." Richard Baxter, exclaims, "Oh! if the eyes of Christians were but opened to see their glorious attendants, they would be more sensible of this privilege, and more thankful than now they be. Some common benefits, even common men may have by these angels, while they forfeit not their helps, but not those special benefits as the saints." "For my part," he adds, "I have had many deliverances so marvellous as convinceth me of the ministry of angels in them." John Wesley, in a sermon on Heb. i. 14. says, "May they (the angels) not also minister to us with respect to our bodies in a thousand ways which we do not understand? They may prevent our falling into many dangers, which we are not sensible of, and may deliver us out of many others, though we know not whence our deliverance comes. How many times

have we been strangely and unaccountably preserved in sudden and dangerous falls; and it is well if we did not impute that preservation to chance, or to our own wisdom or strength. Not so: God, perhaps, gave his angels charge over us, and in their hands they bore us up. Indeed, men of the world will always impute such deliverances to accidents or second causes. To these possibly some of them might have imputed Daniel's preservation in the lion's den. But he himself ascribes it to the true cause: 'My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the mouths of the lions.'—Daniel vi. 22.

"When a violent disease, supposed incurable, is totally and suddenly removed, it is by no means improbable that this is effected by the ministry of an angel. And perhaps it is owing to the same cause that a remedy is unaccountably suggested, either to the sick person or some one attending upon him, by which he is entirely cured.

"It seems, what are usually called divine dreams, may frequently be ascribed to angels. We have a remarkable instance of this kind related, by one who will hardly be called an enthusiast, for he was a heathen, a philosopher, and an emperor; I mean Marcus Antoninus. 'In his meditations he solemnly thanks God for revealing to him when he was at Cajeta, in a dream, what totally cured the bloody flux, which none of his physicians were able to heal.' And why may we not suppose that God gave him this notice by the ministry of an angel?

"And how often does God deliver us from evil men by the ministry of angels; overturning whatever their rage, or malice, or subtilty had plotted against us! These are about their beds, and about their path, and privy to all their dark designs; and many of them undoubtedly they have brought to nought, by means that we think not of. They can check them in their mad career by bereaving them of courage or strength; by striking faintness through their loins, or turning their wisdom into foolishness. Sometimes they bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and show us the traps laid for our feet. In these and various other ways they hew the snares of the ungodly to pieces."

Charles Wesley, (the brother of John Wesley) sings

"Angels, where'er we go, attend,
Our steps, whate'er betide,
With watchful care their charge defend,
And evil turn aside.

"Their instrumental aid unknown,
They day and night supply,
And free from fear we lay us down,
Though Satan's host be nigh.

"Our lives the holy angels keep
From every hostile power;
And unconcerned we sweetly sleep,
As Adam in his bower."

And in a similar strain Dr. Watts sings

"He bids his angels pitch their tents
Round where his children dwell;
What ills their heavenly care prevents
No earthly tongue can tell."

Dr. Dwight, of America, says, "They (the angels) do not disdain nor grudge

to minister to the wants and to the relief, to the instruction and the comfort of men : who compared with them, are only worms of the dust."

During the past year, one of the most eminent Independent Ministers in London, the Rev. W. Landels, preached a sermon on "Ministering Spirits;" (which has been printed and widely circulated.) In this sermon, he says, "Their (the angels) ministry is not a matter of inference chiefly, but of direct and unmistakable testimony. The Scriptures distinctly and positively affirm that holy angels are our attendants, and perform for us various services." These services he enumerates, with illustrative citations from Scripture. Again, after quoting texts in proof, that the Bible sanctions the belief in "Ministering Spirits," he says, "The testimony of these passages is not to be set aside by the fancy to which some so tenaciously cling, that they relate exclusively to the past; for they make no mention of one time more than another. They describe the privileges of the righteous, without reference to time, and throughout every age of the Church's history. Moreover, it should be remembered by those who are so ready to refer them to the past, that the present dispensation is not distinguished from those which preceded it by less, but by greater privileges. It cannot be denied that we need the aid of unseen beings as much now as ever—that their protection, their succour, their gentle influences, the consolation which they minister, are as much required as at any former age. And if equally needed, surely in an age of greater privilege we are not to suppose that their services have been withdrawn. To me the doctrine of ministering spirits, next to the revelation of God's Fatherly character, is one of the most comforting which the Bible contains; and to restore and confirm the church's belief in it, and teach her what it implies, is to render her most valuable service."

These are testimonies of men whose fame is in all the churches; and they may serve to show that Spiritualism, is not essentially, a new doctrine, and though it may be fashionable just now, to affect a contempt for it as a vulgar superstition, and thus save the expenditure of argument which might not be readily forthcoming; yet we venture to think, with all due respect to modern philosophers, that the authority of Scripture, the faith of ages, and the deliberately expressed opinion of thoughtful men, whose views, apart from this question, have weight with the Christian world, should lead them to consider that possibly the subject may have some claims to a candid and serious consideration.

We are aware that some of the modes of celestial and spiritual intercourse of our day, were foreign to the thought of, and were indeed unknown to, many of the illustrious men whose testimonies we have cited; but they admit the fact of continued Angelic and Spiritual ministrations; and where this is conceded, the question whether or no it takes place in the ways that Spiritualists allege, is simply a question of fact, to be determined by the evidence presented. We say, *first* inquire into the facts, and *then*, form your judgment: we ask no more. But even on the *a priori* ground we think it may be expected that the means by which celestial and spiritual intercourse with men is carried on should vary in different ages to meet men's varying needs; and it appears to us that the current spiritual manifestations are peculiarly adapted to meet the wide spread materialism of the present time.

We have sought in this Essay, to illustrate the belief in Guardian Angels and Ministering Spirits, rather than to demonstrate its truth: the latter attempt indeed could not have been made, without first proving the truth of other facts and beliefs upon which it is dependant, and which we have here assumed; but in the words of a distinguished writer on Philosophy—Dr. George Moore, Author of the "Use of the Body in relation to the Mind" we may say that "the philosophy which fails to find her desired substitute for religion, also fails to prove that there is any absurdity in believing in these ministrations of angels which Christianity intimates," and by which, "worlds upon worlds of varied intelligencies are bound together in the community of necessity and existence." It is true that it may be easy to excite a smile at some of the concomitants with which this belief is at times associated, though even these are often only the confounding of a truth with the symbol by which it is expressed; but, apart from these accidental associations, we see no absurdity in a faith which has proved a source of rest and strength, of comfort and hope to men in every age;—which has been the inspiration of genius, and is consecrated by the best feelings of the heart.

The belief in Guardian Angels and Ministering Spirits is not and cannot become a barren creed if we think upon it, and allow it to work out its natural results. The thought that holy angels surround us, that we are watched by pure and loving eyes, that those whose memories we cherish and revere are still with us, interesting themselves in our welfare—guarding us from evil, and directing and strengthening us in the path of duty, surely cannot fail to exercise upon us an influence of the most salutary kind. May we strive after that holiness which alone can render us meet companions of the

"Bright ministers of God and grace."

"O EVERLASTING God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order; mercifully grant, that as thy holy Angels alway do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." *The Book of Common Prayer. Collect. St. Michael and all Angels.*

FACTS IN SWEDEN. The Baron Dirckinck Holmfeld, of Denmark, but at present in London, writes to us as follows:—

"Some people are inclined to think that the "spiritual manifestations," or the phenomena ranged under this head, are limited to certain countries; that, born in America, they were, as it were, transplanted to England, and thence to France. There is some error in the view thus taken. In the course of time Spiritualism has had its periods of frequent occurrence, and again of rarity, so that sometimes it has nearly disappeared, again to come up at a subsequent period with more prominence. So it is also as to the places of its appearance, some countries being at certain periods the central stages for its manifestation, while in others it seldom occurs, and in others all records of it are totally wanting.

Some facts and states which have recently been observed in Sweden, most certainly show that the spiritual impulses or manifestations are working in a more

universal way or sense, while the form in which they work is very different and variable. The religious movement amongst the lower classes of Sweden and Norway, will, as to the manner in which it works and spreads, scarcely be explained otherwise, than by a spiritual influence and touch. But such influence has been so common through various periods and in various countries that nothing that strikes us, no particular spiritual cause is easily recognized in it. People pass it by without noticing it, while solitary facts, like that of the young ladies in a part of Piedmont, climbing on trees and roofs, and withstanding the exorcisms of the priests, are apt to strike people's attention as more extraordinary. Such are the facts which occurred, during the last few years, in some parts of Sweden, of which, from remembrance, I can give only an incomplete sketch.

In the vicinity of Carlshamn, (Bleking) the peasant-population generally were impressed by the idea that the citizens in that town had formed a cannibalic scheme of slaughtering and eating them when coming to town; and as the farmers would not altogether desist from bringing their produce to the market, they generally went there with the greatest anxiety and circumspection, taking care however not to enter into houses or private places, and to be able to retire on the slightest cannibal demonstration of their supposed enemies. Cases occurred such as that of a peasant-woman making her bargain from the street with the landlady inside the house, and leaving all her stores in her haste to retire quickly, when the latter called on her husband for the money wherewith to pay her. Such was the epidemic terror which for a considerable time had possession of their minds, and which no reasoning could remove. Of greater importance was the current far spread epidemic—spiritual disease in the *Dalar* in Sweden people believing that their neighbours regularly went to the witches' meeting-places, far off, just as we know the sad stories from three hundred years ago. Hundreds of children deposed before the magistrates that in the night they had been carried away by such or such a one, and had travelled to the place of meeting in their mysterious company. Defunciations became common between suspected parties, the one child telling that it had seen its comrade carried by some woman, who was named, and parents began fighting to save their children by denouncing the evil deeds of the supposed witches. It appears to me that some sudden, or irregular, or demoniacal influence from the world of spirits, is the cause by which phenomena so far extended, are easiest to be accounted for. If we only knew what of the kind is going on in different parts of the world, we might prove that the phenomena are far more extensive and frequent than is generally believed.

As to the mentioned manifestations in Piedmont, or Savoy, I venture to call attention to a statement which went through the continental papers about a year ago, stating that the young girls in a district of the country all at once left their schools and homes, and went into the fields and woods, roaming, screaming, and behaving wildly in different ways. Exhortations being insufficient, the clergy endeavoured to exorcise the poor obsessed girls, who repelled them calling them devils, sorcerers, and the like. I quote this only from remembrance and may be incorrect as to particulars.

[In "The Seeress of Prevorst" page 31, we find a statement by the learned Dr. Kerner, which shows another singular form of these mental epidemics, so well worth our inquiry and research, and which we subjoin. Speaking of Prevorst, and the neighbouring village of Neuhutte, in Wurtemberg, Dr. Kerner says:—

"As is usually the case with highlanders, they are a strong race of people. Maladies common to low-landers, as the ague, are here unknown, but nervous derangements frequently appear in early youth—a thing scarcely to be expected among so robust a people. Thus it is observed at Neuhutte, situated like Prevorst upon the mountains, that a sort of St. Vitus' dance becomes epidemic, chiefly amongst young people, so that all the children of the place are seized with it at the same time. Like persons in a magnetic state, they are aware of the precise moment that a fit will seize them; and if they are in the fields when the paroxysm is approaching, they hasten home and immediately fall into a convulsion, in which condition they will move for an hour or more, with the most surprising regularity, keeping measure like an accomplished dancer; after which they frequently awake as out of a magnetic sleep, without any recollection of what has happened. It is also certain, that these mountaineers are peculiarly sensible to magnetic influences, amongst the evidences of which are their susceptibility to sympathetic remedies, and their power of discovering springs by means of the divining rod." Ed.]

A MURDER DISCOVERED BY A DREAM.—A discovery surprising, if true, of a horrible murder, is related by a Belgian journal of a recent date, of which we make a summary:—Two brothers, Israelites, set out from Gyek, with a view of placing their two daughters at a boarding school in the town of Grosswardein. During the night of their absence the youngest daughter, aged 10, who was left at home, woke up her mother suddenly during the night, and crying bitterly, declared that she saw her father and uncle and all being murdered. The mother for some time took no notice of the child's declaration, but, as she persisted, and would not be pacified, she began to be alarmed herself, and the next morning took the child before the mayor of the town, to whom she declared her dream, stating at the same time that the murderers were two men living in the neighbourhood, whom she deliberately pointed out, and further added that the murder was committed at the entrance of the forest, on the road to Grosswardein. The mayor, after receiving this revelation, thought it prudent to make inquiry after the two neighbours indicated by the child, when, singularly enough, they were discovered to be absent from home. This suspicious circumstance induced the mayor to despatch some officers to the forest alluded to by the child, who discovered the horrible spectacle of five bodies extended on the ground which were those of the brothers, the two daughters, and the driver of the vehicle in which they all took their departure. The corpses appeared to have all been set on fire, so as to prevent their identity, and the vehicle was nowhere to be discovered. This horrible tragedy led the officers to examine the whole neighbourhood, when they fortunately pounced upon the two neighbours at a fair not distant, as they were in the very act of changing some notes on which some spots of blood were visible. On being seized they

immediately confessed the crime, and on the child's dream being revealed to them acknowledged the finger of Providence displayed in their capture. This wonderful dream on the part of the child, and its fulfilment excited an immense sensation in the neighbourhood.—*Jewish Chronicle*.

LAMARTINE AND THE COUNTESS LANDSFELD.—We are glad to give instances of the good effects of following spiritual impressions, and the two recently brought to our notice ought to be recorded here as real Spiritual phenomena.

"A short time since M. Lamartine received intelligence of a legacy amounting to £8,000, which had been left to him by a maiden lady of the department of the Orne, named Martin, with whom he was utterly unacquainted. He immediately sent his notary to make inquiries into the circumstance. It was found to be quite correct. M. Lamartine learnt, however, that Mademoiselle Martin had a brother, a sister, and a niece, who expected to be her heirs, and who were in despair upon finding themselves disinherited. With the same generous sentiment that has characterised all his actions, the gifted author at once gave up his claim to the property, and placed it at the disposal of those to whom it of right belonged."

The Countess of Landsfeld too, who is now lecturing with such success in London, whilst in America, made careful inquiry into the whole range of Spiritual phenomena, and having satisfied herself of their reality, had the honesty and strong sense to avow her convictions. She delivered several public lectures on Spiritualism, giving the proceeds to charitable purposes, and shewing those generous sympathies, which have never been strange to her. Whilst in America, she was engaged to be married to a gentleman there, who was unfortunately killed, and it was then found that he had left her the whole of his fortune, amounting to £20,000. She refused to receive any of it, and gave it up to her lover's relations; a noble spiritual act, which may well be counted in estimating her character, and contrasts with the doings of others who have more pretensions.

EXTRAORDINARY DREAM.—On Wednesday, an investigation took place in the board-room of the Strand Union, Bow-street, before Mr. Bedford, on the body of a man named William Death, aged forty, whose body was discovered in a complete state of nudity, under the following circumstances:—William Atkinson, beadle at the Piazza, Covent-garden, stated that he had for some time known the deceased, but had latterly considered him of weak intellect. On Friday night he (witness) dreamt that deceased had committed suicide by hanging himself in a house in White Hart Street. On the following day, (Saturday) he became so uneasy that he determined to visit deceased; for the dream had made a deep impression on him. He first, however, went to Mr. Robins's room and told the porter there, who consented to accompany him. On entering the house, No. 3, White Hart-street, they called to deceased, but on receiving no answer proceeded to the front door on the first floor, and, on entering, were horrified to see the deceased lying on his face in a corner of the room in a perfect state of nudity, and quite dead. The Coroner, in summing up, remarked that the case was one of the most extraordinary ever brought under his notice, but had been made quite clear. The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony. *Times of 25th March.*

THE SHELBURNE DREAM AND APPEARANCE.

We extract an interesting record found in the "Life of Mary Ann Schimmelpenninck," recently published by Longmans and Co. The Story is well told, and appears to be authentic. Probably there are few families who could not furnish us with one equally striking.

"I will close these extracts by one of a different description. At a distance of sixty or more years, I cannot vouch for the accuracy of my memory in its subordinate details; but of its substantial correctness I am sure, having frequently heard it from Dr. and Mrs. Priestley, and many years after from the medical man the late Dr. Allsop, of Calne, who was concerned in it, and whom I met in a very different circle of society. While Dr. Priestley occupied the place of Librarian to Lord Shelburne, one day, Mr. Petty, the precocious and gifted youth whom I have mentioned, sent for Dr. Priestley, his father, Lord Shelburne being then absent, I think in London. When the Dr. entered, Mr. Petty told him he had passed a very restless night, and had been much disturbed by uncomfortable dreams, which he wished to relate to Dr. Priestley, hoping that by so doing, the painful impression would pass away. He then said he dreamed he had been very unwell, when suddenly the whole house was in preparation for a journey; he was too ill to sit up, but was carried lying down, into the carriage; his surprise was extreme in seeing carriage after carriage in an almost interminable procession. He was alone, and could not speak; he could only gaze in astonishment. The procession at last wound slowly off. After pursuing the road for many hours towards, London, it at last appeared to stop at the door of a church. It was the church of High Wycombe, which is the burial place of the Shelburne family. It seemed, in Mr. Petty's dream, that he entered or rather was carried into the church: he looked back; he saw the procession which followed him was in black, and that the carriage from which he had been taken bore the semblance of a hearse. Here the dream ended, and he awoke. Dr. Priestley told him that the dream was the result of a feverish cold, and that the impression would soon pass off. Nevertheless he thought it better to send for the family medical attendant. Next day Mr. Petty was much better; on the third day he was completely convalescent, so that the doctor permitted him to leave his room; but as it was in January, and illness was prevalent, he desired him on no account to leave the house, and with that precaution took his leave. Late the next afternoon the medical man was returning from his other patients; his road lay by the gates of Bowood, and, as Lord Shelburne was away, he thought he might as well call to see Mr. Petty. What was his surprise when he had passed the lodge, to see the youth himself, without his hat, playfully running to meet him. The Doctor was much astonished, as it was bitterly cold, and the ground covered with snow. He rode towards Mr. Petty to rebuke him for his imprudence, when suddenly he disappeared; whither he knew not, but he seemed instantaneously to vanish. The Doctor thought it very extraordinary, but that probably the youth had not wished to be found transgressing orders, and he rode on to the house; there he learnt that Mr. Petty had just expired.

I give this anecdote as I heard it, but I know that sometime after it was the occasion of Dr. Priestley's exchanging some letters with the celebrated Mr. John Henderson, the friend of Hannah More, who was well known amidst his great talents to have been a believer in supernatural appearances, and Dr. Priestley was anxious to investigate the ground of that belief with one whose intellect placed him above the suspicion of credulity."

MERRY MAY.

"Oh! the merry merry May!"
 Hark! the little children say,
 As they pluck the peach-tree blossoms from the Orchard spray,
 While the tulip blushes red
 In the garden bed,
 And the earth is crowned with flowers for her wedding day.
 "Oh! the merry merry May!"
 "Oh! the merry merry May!"
 Hark! the blissful lovers say,
 While the lilies ring their bride bells, and the fields are gay.
 And the gentle stars above them
 With their wooing glances love them,
 Till their hearts repose in dreamings of the marriage day.
 "Oh! the merry merry May!"
 "Oh! the merry merry May!"
 Hark the aged pilgrim say,
 As the daisies bloom around him from the church-yard clay.
 From the realms of better life,
 Shines his blessed angel-wife,
 She is calling him to follow, from the world away.
 "Oh! the merry merry May!"
 "Oh! the merry merry May!"
 Now the Upper world is gay:
 There the True and Good are blended in their nuptial day—
 There the tender, springing flowers,
 In the sacred bridal bowers,
 Fill their honeyed cells with fragrance while the Angels pray.
 "Oh! the merry, merry May!"

HARRIS—while in Trance.

THE OLD MAN'S DREAM.

THE YOUTH OF THE SOUL.

A poor old man with heart depress'd
 Sat down beneath a tree,
 And on his brow his hand he press'd,
 Like one in misery!
 And, talking to himself, he said
 "What will become of me?
 I'm wither'd, like the yellow blade
 That's dying round this tree!"
 "I am enfeebled, poor, and old:
 Unsteady in my gait;
 My eyes are dim; my body's cold;
 And near the grave I wait."
 "I little know and little feel,
 The fleeting joys of life;
 Where these have been, now sorrows steal,
 Till ended is the strife"
 "I have no home, I have no child
 To speak kind words to me;
 'Tis life's sad winter, bleak and wild,
 And spring can never be."
 "The wither'd leaves, swept by the blast,
 As one by one they fall,
 Remind me of the days now past,
 That I can ne'er recall!"

"Then let me die, and let me sleep
 Beneath yon old yew tree;
 Soon o'er my frame stern death shall creep
 And I shall cease to be."

Thus mused the old man in his grief,
 And tears began to flow;
 Then the Almighty sent relief,
 And staid his flood of woe.

A gentle angel came and stood
 Beside the aged man,
 And closed his eyes to all but good,
 And then his dream began.

He thought that 'twas a summer morn,
 But in a better land,
 And none were left to sit forlorn,
 Who craved a helping hand.

And those he fancied lay at rest
 Beneath the church-yard sod,
 Were living there among the blest,
 In love with man and God.

And the dear partner of his youth
 Whose life sin could not taint,
 (Who little knew but christian truth)
 Was there, a blessed saint.

His long lost blue eye'd little boy,
 Who'd prattled on his knee
 There sweetly shared the seraph's joy,
 An angel form had he.

And good men that he thought had lain
 Within the grave-yard mould,
 Had there been growing young again,
 While he'd been growing old.

But all he saw he lov'd full well
 Because he lov'd his God,
 But human weakness fain would dwell
 Beneath the daisied sod.

The old man woke refresh'd and bless'd,
 Life's mist'ry had been told:
 His spirit with decay was dress'd,
 But never could grow old.

Chatham.

J. JONES.

STILL EXTENDING. A highly esteemed friend of ours, residing in Birmingham, who has taken some pains to investigate Spiritual phenomena, writes thus:—

"There is a woman here who is a medium for tipping, writing, and speaking. She had never learned to write, and could not write, nor read writing; and now she writes under Spirit-influence, a very legible hand, and reads her own writing. She also speaks several unknown or foreign tongues, and translates them into English; she also preaches in English. I have been present at one sitting. She spoke very fast for half an hour or more, in an unknown tongue, and then chanted a translation in English. It appeared to be a sort of anthem in praise of Deity. She and her husband appear to have been worthy people many years among the Primitive Methodists. They appear to be sincere, and I do not like to doubt them. Some say it is all sham and humbug. We know what that is worth, as Spiritualists have had plenty of it."

THE LONDON COMMITTEE. Several additional subscriptions have been received since our last in aid of the fund for establishing a free list for each issue of the *Telegraph*, and it is now posted to about 130 Newspapers and ninety individuals whose names have been furnished to the Committee as likely to take an interest in the subject. After sending a few copies to each, it is intended to go on to other names, leaving those to whom it has been sent, to continue if they wish.

Subscriptions may be sent to Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, of Hampstead, London, N. W., and the Committee request to be furnished with the names of any persons who may be usefully put upon the free list. The names to be sent to Mr. Dixon, 25, Bedford Row, W. C.

CONFESSIONS OF A TRUTH SEEKER: price 5s. Horsell, Paternoster Row, London. At last this work so long looked for, has now been published and we beg our readers to possess themselves of it. In our next we hope to give some extracts it. At from present we can only pronounce it the best work yet published in England on the subject. Already we have received several letters which confirm this statement. An old subscriber to the *Telegraph* says, "I have had two copies of *Truth-Seeker*, * * It is an excellent work."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. A. ALVA.—The Hymn Book, when complete, will be almost the size you name, Price 6d. The stamps received will entitle you to a copy.

REV. A. GALLOU. We received the package of "Practical Christian" papers safe. Since then, No. 25 has reached us, through our London Publisher. In future address "B. Morrell, Keighley, Yorkshire."

J. W. F. "THE HERALD OF LIGHT." The First No. of the third yearly volume is issued this day (May 1st.) It is edited by the Rev. T. L. Harris, the Medium through whom several volumes of matter have been received from the Spirit-land, including "Lyric of the Morning Land," "Epic of the Starry Heaven" "The Celestial Arcana" &c. We should have been glad to insert the prospectus entire, but our limited space prevents us doing so. It is published monthly, and as it generally supports the doctrines of the New Church, we presume it may be obtained at the Swedenborgian Depot, W. White, 36, Bloomsbury St., London, W. C.

M. A. We do not profess to give our readers eyes to see, nor judgment to comprehend. Your charge of "picking people's pockets," and being "made to sell" betrays your ignorance as well as insolence. No. 10 contains more "facts" than you can gain-say, even in the History of the Prophets of the Cevennes; and it is simply untrue that No. 10 is taken up with their history; several other facts are recorded in that number, for which we have reliable evidence. The reply to Mr. White is in the Supplement to No. 10, so that your accusation rests upon a quibble.

Several Articles of interest are unavoidably deferred, including Dr. Dixon's, "Amicus". J. Jones, S. Wilks, Baron Holmfeld, &c.

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